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COX, HANDY MAN OF THE SOUTHERN

By Andrew Joyner

The following clear, strong, able and fair discussion of the transportation question, as it relates to the candidacy of the Republican nominee for Governor and the Republican Party's platform, was furnished me by Mr. Justice just before leaving last night for Asheville, with this simple explanation: "Joyner, some time ago you asked me to give you something on the campaign which you could publish. I have been very busy and have just complied with your request, and have chosen for my subject 'Mr. Cox, The Candidate.'"

"MR. COX, THE CANDIDATE."

By accepting the nomination of the Republican Party for Governor Mr. J. Elwood Cox has justified, if he has not invited, fair criticism of his past and present attitude with respect to public questions. When Mr. Cox's former position is fully understood it will be seen that it is according to the eternal fitness of things that he should be the nominee of the Republican Party in North Carolina. In his public address to the people of North Carolina he states that his candidacy is in response to the earnest entreaty of friends, many of whom are Democrats. It would be interesting to see a list of "Democrats" who have agreed to support him for Governor, and I invite the publication of their names. If they are good and influential Democrats the tendency would be to help his candidacy, "Democrats" who believe in trusts and high tariff and are opposed to effective regulation and control of public service corporations, can logically vote for Mr. Cox, but those Republicans and Democrats who are opposed to special privileges for a favored few cannot do so.

WHY HIS PRIVATE CHARACTER IS CONSPICUOUS.

Much has been said by Mr. Cox's party friends of his personal character. I do not think it would be proper for me to say anything against his private character, if I were disposed to do so, and, besides, I know of nothing to be said against it. I freely grant that he is sober, pays his debts, is not immoral, and contributes to his church. I believe this to be true, notwithstanding the attack upon him by the editor of the official organ of his party.

If Mr. Cox were a Democrat the possession of a good private character would not make him conspicuous. It is the rule of the Democratic Party to nominate decent men for office, and when the Republicans make so much noise about the nomination of a man who has a good private character it would seem to indicate that with that party it is the exception. Notwithstanding Mr. Cox's private character is good, there are few men in the State who are, by their interests, environment and views, so disqualified to serve the people in an official capacity as Mr. Cox. He has for years been the all-around "handy man" of the Southern Railway Company in Guilford County. The arrangement has been profitable to Mr. Cox and, I have no doubt, to the railway company also. Mr. Cox has given evidence of his high appreciation of the favors the railway company has bestowed upon him, and he is as prone to think with it as the spars are to fly upwards.

Mr. Cox says in his recent public address asking for the suffrage of the people:

"As to national affairs, I desire first to say that I am in thorough accord with the principles and policies of the party as enunciated in the Republican national platform as adopted at Chicago," etc.

That platform says:

"The great accomplishments of President Roosevelt have been * * * the more effective regulation of the rates and services of the great trans-

portation lines."

And again in the same paragraph: "We declare our unflinching adherence to the policies thus inaugurated, and pledge their continuance under a Republican administration of the government."

The above declaration of Mr. Cox might be termed "after taking," and below I quote Mr. Cox's views on Mr. Roosevelt's rate bill "before taking."

WITNESS FOR SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

In 1906 Mr. Cox was a witness in the case of the Southern Railway Company against the city of High Point, and his testimony is filed in the Circuit Court of the United States here. I cross-examined him in that case with a view of showing he was a biased witness. He had at that time been before a committee of the Senate of the United States having in charge the "Roosevelt rate bill," and there testified that there was very little complaint in North Carolina on account of freight rates.

COX'S TESTIMONY IN HIGH POINT CASE.

In the High Point case he testified: Q. This is not the first time they (meaning the Southern Railway Company) have called you as a witness?

A. I think I have never been a witness before.

Q. They have had some little agitation recently in Washington about some freight rates suggested by a man by the name of Roosevelt, I believe?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. I believe you know public sentiment is very strong with Roosevelt to give some legal body power to regulate freight charges?

A. There is a difference of opinion about that.

Q. You don't think there is much doubt about where public sentiment is?

A. I question whether all the sentiment is with Roosevelt now.

Q. I mean the majority.

A. I question whether the majority is. It is not difficult to see where Mr. Cox's sentiment was.

Again he was asked:

Q. Who communicated with you with regard to being a witness (before the Senate committee), Mr. Cox?

A. I don't think I can recall who first communicated with me about this. I was interested enough to give my opinion as a business man.

Q. What official of the Southern Railway did?

A. I had some talk with some of the freight agents about it. I think Mr. Mr. Shaw, for one.

Q. Where does he live?

A. Birmingham.

Q. What is his position?

A. He was at that time commercial freight agent.

Q. I believe that at that time it was your opinion that it was unwise to give the Interstate Commerce Commission power to revise freight rates and charges established by the railroads?

A. I think to throw the matter in politics would be very injurious to my town and to my business.

Q. Suppose you kept it out of politics, with both Democrats and Republicans on the committee unanimously reporting in favor of it and both Democrats and Republicans jointly voting for it?

A. Then I would be afraid that this commission would consist of men who have no experience, and I simply stated before the committee that my experience had been that I would rather deal direct with the railroad officials or agents who had experience and who knew and understood my business affairs, and I explained it to them that I would rather deal with them than with people who had no experience.

Mr. Cox at that time had been for a dozen years or more the beneficiary of the Southern Railway Company's gratuity, and he showed in his testimony at High Point that he understood he was expected to show his appreciation.

He testified:

Q. Do you get any emoluments or privileges by reason of your being a director?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you get?

A. I have a pass.

Q. A pass over the High Point, Ashboro and Randleman road?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it pass you anywhere else?

A. It passes me on part of the Southern.

Q. It passes you all over North Carolina, Virginia and on to Washington?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you use your pass much?

A. Occasionally I do.

Q. How often?

A. I can't tell. I have occasion to travel some in my business.

Q. How long have you been given a pass over the Southern?

A. I have had that ever since the Ashboro road was built.

Q. How long is that?

A. I don't recollect the year. I think it is some dozen or more years.

Q. Do you know why the Southern Railway Company gives you a pass because of your directorship in the road to Ashboro?

A. It is customary to give directors passes, I believe.

Q. Do you understand that the Southern Railway extends that same privilege to others as well as to yourself?

A. It is a custom, I suppose, of the road.

Q. Do you know why they made that custom?

A. No, except that it is just the custom of the road.

Q. Did you ever know a man who held a directorship in a small road and held a pass over the Southern Railway, as you have, that was not friendly to the Southern Railway?

A. Well, I suppose they are likely to be friendly. If they are directors in the road they are very likely to be friendly.

Q. Don't you think the reason they give passes is to get friends scattered around over the country?

A. Possibly so.

Q. You know as a fact that men lose their passes by showing an unfriendly spirit to railroads when they are directors of these small roads, don't you?

A. I suppose they might.

Mr. Cox, as a candidate for Governor, says in his address to the people: "I am strongly opposed to rebates or any sort of discrimination, and, speaking for myself, have never been able to understand why the railroads should give Virginia cities better rates than they give North Carolina cities. This question should receive the continued and urgent attention of our people until it is corrected."

He had a splendid opportunity to point out these abuses when he was asked, before the Senate committee, whether there was any complaint in North Carolina about rates, and instead of doing it he said there was very little. His rates were satisfactory, and he preferred to deal with the railroad companies in getting rates rather than to deal with a commission. This was the position of the railroad companies also. He was satisfied with the treatment that he had received, and therefore it appeared to him that there was little complaint. How many other business men in this State agree with Mr. Cox that rates are satisfactory, and there is but little complaint?

Mr. Cox, in his public address, lays great stress upon the fact that he has received no rebates. He says:

"It is due me that I should state positively I have never asked for or received a rebate from any railroad company."

Why should he receive a rebate, when he is given rates on the raw material that is shipped to shuttle block factories which he owns or in which he is interested, and satisfactory rates on the manufactured product out from these factories to points where he sells this product?

It does not meet the case to say these rates apply to all who have such factories at these points, and to all who ship from these particular points to other particular points where his product is sold, for there are no other factories in competition with Mr. Cox's business, and if one were started at one of these points it is probable that the rates would go up at that point and Mr. Cox would supply the demand from other factories where the rates were cheaper.

In his public address he says:

"And in this connection I beg to state emphatically that I have not a dollar invested in any sort of combine or trust or in any line of business that any man can fairly claim favors of a trust."

Whether Mr. Cox owns a trust depends on his definition of what is a trust.

It has been but a few years since the Republicans declared that there were no trusts. It would be interesting to know Mr. Cox's definition of a trust.

It has been publicly charged for years that Mr. Cox manufactures practically all of the shuttle blocks made in this country, and if this be true, of course there is no other mar-

ket where the raw material can be sold, and he alone fixes the price and thereby arbitrarily fixes his profits. The railroad rates can be used for his benefit just as the protective tariff is used for the benefit of other trusts. Mr. Rockefeller says the Standard Oil Company is not a trust; Mr. Duke, that the American Tobacco Company is not a trust; and Mr. Foraker, that his connection with the Standard Oil Company was entirely proper; and when the Legislature of 1907 was besieged with the lobbyists of the American Tobacco Company and successfully resisted their importunities, Mr. Cox said that the action of the Legislature with respect to the trust bills which were before it was radical, and condemned in unmeasured terms those who took a course that was not satisfactory to the American Tobacco Company.

It is therefore fair to say that Mr. Cox has not fairly met these issues by saying that he has no money invested in trusts.

THE DEMOCRATIC POSITION.

The Democratic State platform declares:

"Conspiracies by prospective purchasers to put down or keep down the price of articles produced by the labor of others, which such persons enter into the conspiracy expect to buy, should be made criminal."

This is subsection A of the Reid bill, and it would be interesting to know from Mr. Cox whether he favored it when it was pending before the Legislature of 1907, before he became a candidate for Governor, and whether he is prepared to say, now that he is a candidate, that he opposes it. The tobacco farmers in the State who are Republicans would doubtless be interested in an explicit statement as to his position on this question.

HIS HOTEL ON SOUTHERN RIGHT OF WAY.

Mr. Cox is the reputed owner of a very expensive hotel in the city of High Point, the "Elwood," and it is stated that what was or is the right of way of the Southern Railway Company.

When the new depot was recently built in High Point it was moved up from its old site to a point but a few feet from Mr. Cox's hotel.

If Mr. Cox were elected Governor and he should fail to show his appreciation of all these favors, he would be roundly denounced by the Southern Railway Company and its political machine as an ingrate.

He says in his public address:

"I believe also in the proper, just and strict regulation of all railroads and other public carriers, and in requiring all corporations to obey the law as strictly and faithfully as the humblest private citizen."

In view of Mr. Cox's record, what does a declaration like this count for? It would be more interesting to know what he proposes to do for the relief of the business men of the State from the burden of excessive and discriminatory rates. What plan has he to execute as Governor? Let him speak for himself.

In his public address he says:

"Being a business man and not a politician, I take it that it is not expected I should enter into any elaborate discussion of the political issues of the day."

And again:

"Finally, if elected Governor of North Carolina, my administration will not be characterized as a political administration, but purely that of a business man, having no axe to grind or political debts to pay or future political ambition to satisfy."

It is not every "business man" who receives or expects the favors from special interests which Mr. Cox is shown to receive. The real business men in North Carolina ask no favors from special interests, but demand merely an open field and a fair fight. They cannot be brought to sympathize with those who have learned in favor of special interests by an appeal to "business men."

Mr. Cox does not strengthen his case by pleading ignorance of politics. Politics is defined to be "the branch of civics that treats of the principles of civil government and the conduct of State affairs; the administration of public affairs in the interests of the peace, the prosperity and safety of the State."

The real business man should know, and most of them do know, as much about politics as a science of government as other classes.

None can say of Mr. Kitchin that he is not more in harmony with the real and legitimate business interests of North Carolina than Mr. Cox has shown himself to be as a witness before the Senate committee or in his public address. Certainly Mr. Kitchin has received no benefits from the railroad companies of the State, against the interests of the people that would give them any claim on him for special favors. If he were elected Governor, it may be said by Mr. Cox's friends that he is too good a man and too strong a man to be influenced by others to do anything that he does not think it his duty to do. In the Republican State Convention at Charlotte he took the position that the school question should be taken out of politics and that no nomination should be made against Mr. Joyner for Superintendent of Public Instruction. It was an easy matter for Republican politicians to influence him to "cede" from this position. Inasmuch as he was "handled" by them there in public, it is not unjust to him to suppose that if he were Governor they could continue to "handle" him.

Mr. Kitchin can logically be supported by all men who believe in honest reform of real abuses. It is nothing to his discredit for him to have been denounced as being radical. When his record upon public questions is examined it will be seen there is no single instance in which he has taken an extreme or unfair position upon any public question.

Mr. Cox poses as a conservative, when really he is radical, but radical in opposing whatever the railroads and special interests oppose, and favoring what they favor.

Mr. Cox claims that he is entitled to the support of men engaged in the mercantile and manufacturing business simply because he is engaged in manufacturing. This is an appeal to

class, and is unfortunate for him, because he does not take proper note of the intelligence of the business men in North Carolina. They do not run off after strange gods merely because of a "catchy" label.

Four years ago the Republican Party tried the same experiment in nominating Charles J. Harris, a so-called "business man," that they are trying this year. The real business men did not leave the Democratic Party then, and there is no reason for the party to fear that they will do so now.

The Republican State platform, by its silence, in effect commends the administration of State affairs by the Democratic Party, except in one particular, and that is with reference to railroad legislation. When the facts are known there is no justification or excuse for the opposition of the railroad companies in the State to the enactment and enforcement of these laws or for the criticism by the Republican State platform. The Democratic State platform truthfully and fully covers the case in the following language:

"The Democratic Party has kept its promise and materially reduced passenger and freight rates in the State. It has given to the people lower rates, and the reports of the railroad companies show that this reduction of rates has been accompanied by increased revenue on that class of business affected by the laws of the State reducing the rates."

E. J. JUSTICE.

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Sheriff—V. C. V. Shepherd.
Register of Deeds—J. R. Wilkie.
Surveyor—Sam Y. Bryson.
Coroner—Dr. L. P. Russell.
Commissioners—Sam J. Justice, J. Press Fletcher, G. B. Hill.

Haywood County Ticket.

Representative—H. R. Ferguson.
Sheriff—W. R. Medford.
Register of Deeds—J. M. Noland.
Treasurer—Hugh A. Love.
Coroner—J. E. Moore.
Surveyor—O. O. Standford.
Commissioners—M. M. Noland, W. D. McCracken, W. H. Henderson.

Transylvania County Ticket.

Representative—G. W. Wilson.
Sheriff—C. C. Kilpatrick.
Register of Deeds—B. A. Gillespie.
Treasurer—Z. W. Nichols.
Surveyor—A. L. Hardin.
Coroner—Dr. W. J. Wallis.
Commissioners—W. M. Henry, G. T. Lyday, W. E. Galloway.

Rutherford County Ticket.

Representative—L. C. Daily.
Sheriff—C. E. Tanner.
Register of Deeds—J. D. Hull.
Treasurer—A. R. Yelton.
Surveyor—M. G. Craw.
Coroner—J. B. Bland.
Superintendent—B. H. Bridges.
Commissioners—J. P. Jones, E. N. Washburn, Richard Ledbetter.

Jackson County Ticket.

State Senate—Capt. A. M. Fry.
House of Representatives—B. H. Cathey.
Sheriff—J. W. Davis.
Register of Deeds—J. S. Calhoun.
Treasurer—J. A. Williams.
Surveyor—A. L. Brown.
Coroner—J. W. Shelton.
Commissioners—W. T. Deitz, J. N. Bumgarner, J. M. Watson.

SWAIN COUNTY TICKET

Sheriff—R. J. Roan.
Register of Deeds—J. A. Tabor.
Treasurer—J. S. Smiley.
Coroner—Dr. D. R. Bryson.
Commissioners—T. H. Parish, J. R. Monteith, J. L. Gibson.

Buncombe County Ticket.

State Senate—Frank Carter.
Representatives—R. J. Gaston, Zebulon Weaver.
Sheriff—T. F. Hunter.
Register of Deeds—J. J. Mackey.
Treasurer—T. M. Duckett.
Surveyor—Otto Israel.
Coroner—Dr. E. R. Morris.
Auditor—R. J. Stokely.
Commissioners—J. E. Rankin, Pitt Weaver, R. M. Clayton, J. F. Wells, M. S. Glenn.

Macon County Ticket.

Representative—J. Frank Ray.
Sheriff—Alex. Moore.
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